



**LAC-IEE-04-30**

## **CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION**

**Activity location:** Region-wide, with focus on Caribbean, Central America and the Dominican Republic, and Andean sub regions

**Activity title:** Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training, and IR23.1—Improved Environment for Education Reform

**Activity number:** 598-023

**Funding:** \$20 million

**Life of activity:** 5 years

**IEE prepared by:** Barbara Knox-Seith, LAC/RSD

**Recommended threshold decision:** Categorical Exclusion

**Bureau Threshold Decision:** Concur with Recommendation

### **Comments:**

A **categorical exclusion** is issued for the expanded activities under CETT and IR1, as was provided for the original activities under the original IEE for SO23 and Amendment 1. All interventions under the CETT and IR1 activities continue to fall within 22 CFR Section 216.2 c as follows:

- (1)(i) The action does not have an effect on the natural or physical environment;
- (2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.);
- (2)(iii) Analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings; and
- (2)(iv) Document and information transfers.

No construction is anticipated.

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George R. Thompson, P.E.  
Bureau Environmental Officer  
Bureau for Latin America & the Caribbean

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Date

Copy to : Cecily Mango, LAC/RSD

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Copy to : IEE File

Attachment: IEE

### **Initial Environmental Examination: Amendment 3**

<u>Activity location:</u>	Region-wide, with focus on Caribbean, Central America and the Dominican Republic, and Andean sub regions
<u>Activity title:</u>	Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training, and IR23.1—Improved Environment for Education Reform
<u>Activity number:</u>	598-023
<u>Funding:</u>	\$20 million
<u>Life of activity:</u>	5 years
<u>IEE prepared by:</u>	Barbara Knox-Seith, LAC/RSD
<u>Recommended threshold decision:</u>	Categorical Exclusion

**Background:** On August 24, 2001 an Initial Environmental Examination (LAC-IEE-01-48) was approved for LAC/RSD's 2001-2006 Regional Strategic Objective, Strengthened Regional Initiatives to Improve Equity and Quality in Education and Training. The initial IEE covered most activities under the SO, including the policy component of the SO (IR1) and an initial \$1 million design phase of the 2001 Summit of the Americas initiative, the Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT). Amendment 1 to the IEE (LAC-IEE-02-53) was approved to cover the remaining \$19 million of the \$20 million CETT initiative as of September, 2002. Amendment 2 (LAC-IEE-03-11) was approved on March 26, 2003 to authorize the use of \$46.8 for the Cooperative Association of States for Scholarships (CASS) program. At this time, the funding ceiling for CETT is being raised by \$15 million to \$35 million, and the funding ceiling for IR1 is being raised by \$5 million to \$20.6 million. This IEE (Amendment 3) for \$20 million seeks a categorical exclusion for the expansion of activities under the CETT program and IR1, including on-going implementation of three regional CETTs and policy reform activities under IR1.

#### **Summary Activity Description: CETT**

As described in Amendment 1, CETT comprises three sub regional teacher training activities, one each in the Caribbean, Central American, and Andean regions. CETT is intended to improve reading instruction—and literacy—in the region through teacher training, focused on teachers of the early primary grades. Local universities are collaborating to implement the activities in each region.

Progress has been made on all CETT components, with the teacher training component most firmly established. The current amendment seeks to expand the reach of CETT to additional countries, schools, teachers and students, and to solidify its impact by expanding the components of materials development, diagnostic and performance assessment, and application of ICT technology to realize the full benefits of the investment in teacher training. CETT activities remain the same. Each CETT improves teacher training in reading instruction in the three regions through: providing in-service teacher training to improve teachers' pedagogical skills, especially in reading instruction; providing assessment instruments for teachers to assess student performance in reading and diagnose difficulties;

generating teaching and learning materials focused on improving reading instruction in the classroom; using applied research to enhance the teacher training, tools, and materials and ensure the excellence of the training; and applying Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to facilitate information sharing and extend the reach of the CETT through distance education and a web portal.

### **Summary Activity Description: IR1 – Policy Reform**

As described in the initial IEE, the aim of the policy reform activities carried out under IR1 is to help build regional constituencies for reform—constituencies that will enhance the environment for education reform by holding leaders accountable for moving forward on their Summit of the Americas commitments. This will be accomplished by continuing support for the successful Partnership for Educational Revitalization of the Americas (PREAL) program to publish additional education report cards at the regional, national, and municipal levels; by providing support for development of comparable regional education indicators under the PRIE project; and by supporting the development and pilot testing of a school level report card model for Central America under the Civic Engagement for Educational Reform in Central America (CERCA) activity, and related efforts to build stakeholder consensus and strategies for increasing the transparency and accountability of education systems.

### **Recommended Threshold for CETT Program**

It is recommended that a categorical exclusion be approved for the expanded activities under CETT and IR1, as was provided for the original activities under the original IEE for SO23 and Amendment 1. All interventions under the CETT and IR1 activities continue to fall within 22 CFR Section 216.2 c as follows:

- (1)(i) The action does not have an effect on the natural or physical environment;
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- (2)(iv) Document and information transfers.

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Dave Evans  
Team Leader, LAC/RSD/EHR

### **Concurrence**

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Cecily Mango  
Director, RSD